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Mainstreaming disability in the development agenda

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report has been prepared in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/21 of 24 July 2008 on mainstreaming disability in the development agenda.

The report presents an overview of the status of disability-inclusive development cooperation within the framework of multilateral, regional and bilateral initiatives.

The report concludes with recommendations for mainstreaming disability in the development agenda and development cooperation.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2008/21, the Economic and Social Council expressed concern about the persistent gap that continued to exist between policy and practice regarding mainstreaming the perspective of persons with disabilities in realizing the Millennium Development Goals. The resolution further urges all development partners to "ensure that international cooperation, including international development programmes, is inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities". The resolution also calls for concrete measures to incorporate the perspective of persons with disabilities and accessibility requirements in relation to such issues as poverty eradication, education and training, employment and the allocation of resources.

2. While the resolution addresses several broad issues concerning disability and development, including the role of States, civil society and the private sector in mainstreaming disability in development activities, its primary emphasis is on mainstreaming in the context of international development cooperation.[1] The present report, therefore, responds to the main thrust of the resolution and provides an overview of current efforts to mainstream disability in the development agenda.

3. Mainstreaming disability in development has been on the United Nations agenda for more than a quarter of a century. Many development agencies have taken significant steps to mainstream disability at the policy level as part of an integrated approach to development cooperation, advocating for the promotion of disability-inclusive development. While mainstreaming disability in the development agenda has been discussed at the United Nations for many years, actual policy development and first steps at implementation started only in the mid-1990s in a few agencies, followed by some others after 2000. To date, there are still some United Nations agencies that have not yet fully addressed the policy and implementation issues of mainstreaming disability.

4. The mainstreaming of disability in development cooperation at the programme and project levels is relatively new to most development partners and remains an ongoing process. To date, there has not been extensive experience in mainstreaming disability and so there has been little opportunity to evaluate best practices or share information on implementation. For this reason, there is little new information to report since the adoption of resolution 2008/21, as many development agencies continue to make the transition from developing policy papers and guidance notes to implementing actual programmes and projects. The potential of mainstreaming, therefore, remains to be fully developed and significant further efforts are required.

[1] Ten operative paragraphs of the resolution address development cooperation issues, beginning with the work of the United Nations in realizing the Millennium Development Goals, and seven operative paragraphs address, inter alia, entities of the United Nations system and other members of the international community, relevant United Nations entities, including the agencies, funds and programmes, regional and international financial and development institutions or intergovernmental organizations and international organizations.

II. Mainstreaming disability in the international development agenda: the international normative framework

5. Persons with disabilities have been beneficiaries of development cooperation since the earliest days of the Organization, albeit through a focus on social welfare and services, medical treatment and rehabilitation services.[2] With the adoption of the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons in 1982,[3] the equality of persons with disabilities and their participation in development became an integral part of development objectives. The Programme defined the role of persons with disabilities in development as both agents and beneficiaries and provided, for the first time, an international policy framework for disability-inclusive development.

6. In 1993, the General Assembly adopted the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities,[4] which reaffirmed the principles of inclusive policies, plans and activities in development cooperation and provided further guidance on disability-inclusive measures. Rule 14 of the Standard Rules, on policymaking and planning, stipulates that "needs and concerns of persons with disabilities should be incorporated into general development plans and not be treated separately". The rules also address specifically the question of development cooperation under Rule 21, on technical and economic cooperation, and Rule 22, on international cooperation.

7. The Standard Rules also established a Special Rapporteur on Disability of the Commission for Social Development who is tasked with monitoring the implementation of the Rules. During his first mandate (1994-1997), the first Special Rapporteur, Bengt Lindqvist (Sweden), stated that "to strengthen and integrate disability measures into the mainstream of development cooperation [...], is one of the most urgent measures of all in the future implementation of the Standard Rules".[5]

8. The second Special Rapporteur, Sheikha Hissa Al Thani (Qatar, 2003-2008), noted that there is a definite and inextricable link between poverty and disability, and stated that disability and the concerns of persons with disabilities were still one of the most neglected issues on the agendas of international development organizations.[6] She also noted that there had been initiatives to incorporate the issue of disability into mainstream development but, despite good intentions, they had fallen short of fully addressing the issues. She further stated that there is a need to include disability, both programmatically and financially, in all the poverty reduction and development programmes.[7]

9. In 2006, the General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,[8] which was envisioned from the beginning of the treaty

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[2] See "The United Nations and Disabled Persons: The First Fifty Years" (www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/dis50y00.htm).

[3] General Assembly resolution 61/106, annex I.

[4] General Assembly resolution 48/96, annex.

[5] See A/52/56, para. 135.

[6] Oral presentation of the report of the Special Rapporteur on Disability, presented to the forty-third session of the Commission for Social Development, (www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/reportcsd05.htm).

[7] See E/CN.5/2005/5.

[8] See General Assembly resolution 61/106, annex I.

process as an instrument for promoting both human rights and development.[9] As the only international human rights instrument to have an article on international cooperation, the Convention provides a comprehensive normative framework for mainstreaming disability in the development agenda.

10. The Convention recognizes, in its article 32, the importance of international cooperation and its promotion for the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities and their full inclusion into all aspects of life. In particular, article 32 stipulates that international cooperation measures should be inclusive of and accessible to persons with disabilities; facilitate and support capacity-building, including through the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programmes and best practices; facilitate cooperation in research and access to scientific and technical knowledge; and provide technical and economic assistance, including by facilitating access to and sharing of accessible and assistive technologies, and through the transfer of technologies.

III. Mainstreaming disability: regional policy frameworks

11. There have been several regional initiatives for mainstreaming disability in development cooperation, often in the context of a regional decade on disability. This section presents examples of regional initiatives, which include the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities, the Arab Decade of Disabled Persons, the Asian and Pacific Decades of Disabled Persons and, most recently, the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability. While it is generally too soon to report the results of these initiatives, this section describes how these regional initiatives specifically address mainstreaming disability in development.

12. Regional decades and strategies on disability are crucial for raising awareness and establishing information and support networks for mainstreaming. The primary challenges — and gaps — in implementation reside, however, at the national level. National political will and sufficient resources are required to translate the regional agreements and commitments on mainstreaming into action, particularly in the context of competing development priorities. To influence national political agendas, disabled persons' organizations and other relevant civil society organizations can create awareness and work closely with Governments and aid agencies to develop and implement policies and programmes. Resources may come from donor agencies that are themselves giving priority to disability-inclusive development programmes and projects.

African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2000-2009)

13. The objective of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2000-2009) was to empower all stakeholders in development to work in partnership to include disability and persons with disabilities in all aspects of development in the African context. The work of the Decade was carried out through a number of priority themes such as livelihood opportunities, promoting a disability-inclusive perspective in poverty reduction strategy papers and regarding HIV/AIDS.[10] A significant role

[9] For legislative history of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, go to www.un.org/disabilities.

[10] See Secretariat of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (www.africandecade.org).

was assigned to development cooperation, including promoting intersectoral approaches to policy and programmes, public sector/private sector partnerships and facilitating capacity development and sharing experiences across the region.[11]

14. The secretariat of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities partnered with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Millennium Campaign office in Africa, the Ecumenical Disability Advocates Network and the African Community Development Foundation to organize the first awareness-raising Africa Regional Conference on the Millennium Development Goals and Disability in Nairobi, in 2008.

15. In 2009, the African Decade was extended until 2019, and States re-committed to implementing key thematic social issues through empowering and providing persons with disabilities with equal opportunities, safeguarding their rights and enlisting their participation and mainstreaming their concerns in all development programmes. In this context, the African Union and the European Union (EU) have developed action points on disability under the Millennium Development Goals for health and education in their Joint EU-Africa Strategy and Action Plan (2008-2009).

Arab Decade of Disabled Persons (2003-2012)

16. The period 2003-2012 was proclaimed the Arab Decade of Disabled Persons jointly by the League of Arab States and the Arab Organization of Disabled Persons. The impetus for the decade was a meeting held on the theme "Disability conditions in the Arab world: Towards an Arab decade on disability", hosted by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in Beirut in October 2002.[12]

17. The main target areas identified for the Decade were education, health, legislation, rehabilitation and employment, accessibility and transport, children with disabilities, women with disabilities, older adults with disabilities, media and public awareness, globalization and poverty, and sports and recreation.[13] The Decade has been instrumental in shaping and promoting a regional perspective on the rights of persons with disabilities in development, including its gender perspective.

18. The Arab Decade and improving the quality of life for persons with disabilities through the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities were addressed during a regional conference in Dubai, from 11 to 12 November 2009. The conference reviewed the status of implementation of the Convention in the Arab region and developed action plans for further implementation, including in the areas of accessibility, education, transportation and rehabilitation.

The Asian and Pacific Decades of Disabled Persons

19. During the concluding year of the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (1983-1992), Member States of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) declared an Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons for the period 1993 to 2002, which was followed by the second Decade, from 2003 to 2012.

[11] See A/49/253, para. 32.

[12] See www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/disarabdecade.htm.

[13] See www.friendsfordisabled.org.lb/ArabDecadeEnglish.pdf.

20. A major outcome of the first decade is the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific,[14] which was adopted in 2002 and sets forth regional policy recommendations for action by Governments in the region and concerned stakeholders and identifies seven areas for priority action in the new decade. The regional framework for action explicitly incorporates the Millennium Development Goals and their relevant targets to ensure that concerns relating to persons with disabilities become an integral part of efforts to achieve the goals. The Biwako Millennium Framework incorporates disability concerns into national policies and programmes to achieve the targets of the Millennium Development Goals.[15]

21. The High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Midpoint Review of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, held in Bangkok in September 2007 adopted Biwako Plus Five, which supplements the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and seeks to make a significant contribution to the implementation of the Framework over the remaining five years of the decade (2008-2012).[16] Biwako Plus Five expands on the Framework by calling for specific actions and reformulating priority areas. One such additional action/priority area explicitly refers to the mainstreaming of a disability perspective in national development frameworks, particularly poverty reduction strategies.

22. ESCAP meets biennially, with the participation of persons with disabilities and their organizations, to review the achievements and to identify actions that may be required to further implement the Biwako Framework.

Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability (2010-2015)

23. The first meeting of the Pacific Island Forum of Disability Ministers, held in Rarotonga, from 21 to 23 October 2009, attended by representatives from 13 Pacific Forum member countries, endorsed the Pacific Regional Strategy on Disability 2010-2015 to support member countries to promote the rights of persons with disabilities in the region. The Strategy seeks to provide a framework for the coordination of Government, civil society and other development partners in building a disability-inclusive Pacific, and strengthen the commitment of all stakeholders in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other human rights instruments relating to disability.

24. The Forum of Disability Ministers directed the Forum secretariat and development partners to develop an implementation plan including a monitoring and evaluation framework and to coordinate the mobilization and provision of resources and technical assistance for Forum island countries to implement the Strategy. The Ministers also endorsed the issue of disability-inclusive development as part of Government priorities in all Forum island countries; and agreed to designate a focal ministry to deal with disability issues with allocated budgetary resources.

[14] See www.unescap.org/esid/psis/disability/bmf/bmf.html.

[15] The Biwako Millennium Framework for Action and Biwako Plus Five are significant regional instruments that continue to inform the approach taken to disability inclusion; see *Development for All: Towards a Disability-Inclusive Australian Aid Program 2009-2014* (AusAID (2008)) (www.ausaid.gov.au/keyaid/pdf/FINAL%20AusAID_Development%20for%20All.pdf).

[16] See "Biwako Plus Five: Further Efforts Towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific" (www.unescap.org/esid/psis/Disability/bmf/APDDP2_2E.pdf).

IV. Mainstreaming disability: multilateral cooperation

25. Mainstreaming is an approach that continues to gain attention in multilateral cooperation. In particular, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities has provided new impetus for disability-inclusive development activities at the multilateral level. Several multilateral development agencies are either in the process of drafting new disability policies or strategies or are reviewing their existing approaches with a view to modifying or amending them. This section reviews some of these advances.[17]

26. Within the overall framework of multilateral development cooperation, however, a gap remains between policy and implementation. While the importance of mainstreaming disability into overall development cooperation activities has been increasingly acknowledged, it has not yet taken place. Most agencies continue to implement disability-related activities, but disability issues and concerns are not mainstreamed in sector-wide approaches or given direct budget support. Effective mainstreaming entails evaluating all development cooperation policies and activities for their inclusion of persons with disabilities and assessing the impact of those activities on persons with disabilities. This is a much broader approach that few multilateral development agencies have yet undertaken. Similarly, most agencies have not established units in charge of mainstreaming a disability perspective across their activities.

United Nations Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Development Group task team on disability

27. In the wake of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2006, an Inter-Agency Support Group for the Convention was established.[18] The Group is tasked with promoting compliance with the principles of the Convention and increasing the scale and effectiveness of the United Nations system's involvement in disability issues.

28. The Inter-Agency Support Group is preparing a plan of action to ensure that the programmes and policies of the United Nations system are inclusive of persons with disabilities. A few United Nations agencies, funds and programmes within the United Nations system have already taken steps towards incorporating a disability perspective into their development cooperation activities.[19]

29. As a priority matter, the Inter-Agency Support Group established a United Nations Development Group (UNDG) task team, involving a number of United Nations agencies, to support United Nations country teams and relevant stakeholders to mainstream disability in development cooperation. The task team on disability is developing a guidance note for the United Nations Resident Coordinator system and United Nations country teams to facilitate the integration of the rights of persons with disabilities and disability concerns into United Nations programming at the

[17] A significant source of information for this section is an October 2009 draft of the forthcoming World Bank report entitled "International Cooperation and Disability Inclusive Development: A Review of Policies and Practices", under preparation by the World Bank's Disability and Development team.

[18] See www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=448.

[19] See A/64/128.

country level. The guidance note is of particular importance in the context of United Nations frameworks for operational activities, because UNDG is preparing the new common country assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in more than 90 countries over the next three years. The guidance note is expected to contribute significantly to ensuring that disability issues are mainstreamed in the process of developing the new common country assessment/ UNDAF guidelines.

World Bank

30. The World Bank approach to disability focuses on inclusive development and human capital development as necessary components to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. In operational terms, the Bank approach is to generate knowledge and document good practices to use in the formulation of evidence-informed disability inclusive development policies and to integrate disability issues, to the extent possible, into relevant projects and sectors work. Additionally, the Bank supports accessible infrastructure in its relevant projects. The regional focus of the Bank has been on Africa, South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific, and the Middle East and North Africa.

31. With the objective of building a wide alliance for disability and development, the Bank founded the Global Partnership for Disability and Development.[20] The Partnership was formed to increase collaboration among development agencies, international organizations and civil society organizations, particularly organizations of persons with disabilities, to reduce the extreme poverty and exclusion of the substantial number of persons with disabilities and their families living in poor countries and to accelerate their inclusion into development policies and practices. The Bank is supporting the Partnership through a Development Grant Facility and a multi-donor trust fund established by Italy, Finland and Norway.

32. The work of the World Bank on disability and development is carried out by the Disability and Development Team within the Social Protection and Labour Unit of the Human Development Network. In collaboration with the Italian Development Cooperation, the World Bank is producing a publication for release in late 2009 entitled "International Cooperation and Disability Inclusive Development: A Review of Policies and Practices".

Inter-American Development Bank

33. The Disability and Development Team of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) is located within the Social Development Division of the Sustainable Development Department.[21] The goal of the Disability Team and the four other Social Inclusion Teams is to support the development of socially inclusive policies throughout Latin America and the Caribbean towards the full inclusion and participation of all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, gender and disability.

34. IDB is currently focusing on statistical and measurement issues related to disability. It convened a meeting of the heads of national statistical institutes in 2003 for six Southern Cone countries to review the status of disability data. Participants at that meeting identified two priorities: first, to analyse existing

[20] See http://gpdd-online.org.

[21] See www.iadb.org/sds/soc/site_6190_e.htm.

national data on disability; and second, to promote regional harmonization of definitions in order to have comparable measures of disability and its relationship to poverty, age, gender, ethnicity, education, rural/urban, income and labour force participation. A series of subregional meetings followed, and IDB has published a number of country reports on disability data to guide policymakers in improving disability-specific interventions.[22]

Asian Development Bank[23]

35. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has implemented both regional and country-based activities on disability since 1999, when ADB changed its overarching goal to poverty reduction. To assist ADB and its member countries in incorporating disability issues into poverty reduction strategies and programmes, regional technical assistance was set up with financial support from the Government of Finland. The purpose of the project was to promote understanding and build capacity to address the needs of persons with disabilities in ADB operations and in the member countries.

36. One of the major outputs of the technical assistance project is the 2005 publication *Disability Brief: Identifying and Addressing the Needs of Disabled People*,[24] which is an introduction to disability issues in development for operational staff and their government counterparts and provides background on disability and tools for addressing the needs of disabled persons. The second major output is *Disabled People and Development*,[25] which describes the evolution of the global response to disability, as well as concepts and tools for addressing disability issues.

V. Mainstreaming disability: bilateral cooperation

37. This section reviews actions taken to promote the mainstreaming of disability by selected bilateral development agencies. The review is not exhaustive and serves to illustrate the most prevalent approaches to disability-related bilateral cooperation.[27]

38. A few bilateral agencies, often prodded by national disabled persons' organizations, were among the first development agencies to pursue disability mainstreaming in development cooperation in the 1990s. Others have recently developed or are considering developing an overall disability-inclusive policy framework.

39. Most bilateral agencies have significant experience supporting development cooperation targeted specifically towards persons with disabilities in the form of disability-specific programmes and projects. Since most bilateral mainstreaming policies have been developed since the year 2000, they are still gaining experience in implementation. Many continue to pursue simultaneously both disability-specific and mainstreaming initiatives.

[22] See www.iadb.org/sds/SOC/publication/gen_6191_4114_e.htm.

[23] See www.adb.org/socialprotection/disability.asp.

[24] See www.adb.org/Documents/Reports/Disabled-People-Development/disability-brief.asp.

[25] Asian Development Bank, *Disabled People and Development*, Poverty and Social Development Papers No. 12, June 2005 (www.adb.org/Documents/Reports/Disabled-People-Development/disabled-people.pdf).

Early efforts and experience in mainstreaming disability in bilateral development cooperation

40. The Nordic countries began the process of mainstreaming disability into their development cooperation during the 1990s. A primary impetus for addressing disability inclusion in development across the Nordic countries was a 1991 meeting of Nordic Disabled Persons Organizations in Hanaholmen, Finland.[26]

41. In 1996, the Government of Finland made a formal Decision-in-Principle to include "the status of disabled people as a concern in the context of poverty reduction and human rights".[27] In 1999, Norway adopted the Norwegian Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Development Cooperation, prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Sweden's 1999/2000 disability policy and national action plan for persons with disabilities stipulate that government agencies should integrate the disability perspective into their operations.[28]

42. In 2000, the ministerial meeting on the theme "Nordic Development Cooperation and the Disability Dimension: Good Practices and Challenges of Inclusion" was held in Copenhagen. One outcome of the meeting was that all the Nordic ministers for development cooperation agreed to "recognize and promote the United Nations Standard Rules as guidelines for all bilateral and multilateral development work, and to assure that special measures are taken to create accessibility and participation in development society for persons with disabilities in order to strengthen their possibilities to exercise their human rights".[29]

43. During the same time period, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) was also addressing the issue of disability in its development programmes.[30] Noting a 1996 report issued by the US National Council entitled "Foreign Policy and Disability", which concluded that the United States did not have a comprehensive foreign policy on disability, USAID issued a non-binding Disability Policy Paper in 1997.[31] The policy articulated by the Paper was grounded in the principle of non-discrimination, as reflected in American disability civil rights, with the objective to "avoid discrimination against people with disabilities in programs which USAID funds" and to "promote the inclusion of

[26] Also in the early 1990s, the Department for Economic and Social Affairs published a technical publication, in cooperation with the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (STAKES) Finland and with the Finnish Government, entitled *Disability Dimension in Development Action Manual on Inclusive Planning*. This manual represents one of the first important sources of guidance on how to improve the quality of development policies, programmes and projects by exercising sensitivity to the disability dimension at various phases of the mainstream development prog. .mme or project planning cycle.

[27] *Label us able: a proactive evaluation of Finnish development cooperation from the disability perspective*, STAKES National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (2003).

[28] "From patient to citizen: a national action plan for disability policy", Swedish Government, Government Bill 1999/2000:79.

[29] See Inclusion of the disability dimension in Nordic development cooperation: Final Report of the 2000 Nordic Conference on Disability and Development (2002).

[30] See www.usaid.gov.

[31] See "USAID Disability Policy Paper", USAID Policy Guidance (12 September 1997) (http://pdf.dec.org/pdf_docs/PDABQ631.pdf).

people with disabilities both within USAID programs and in host countries where USAID has programs".[32]

Developments since the year 2000

Australia

44. The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)[33] approach to disability and development, articulated in the strategy "Development for All: Towards a disability-inclusive Australian aid program 2009-2014", is the newest among bilateral donors and the most detailed.[34] The process to develop the approach was participatory, including consultation within and among the Australian disability community and the participation of stakeholders in developing countries where AusAID works.[35] A reference group was also established to provide ongoing strategic guidance on implementation.[36] The Australian strategy is also the only disability and development policy to explicitly indicate the availability of the document in accessible formats.

45. The strategy identifies a number of barriers to disability-inclusion in development, including that disability issues are not included in the Millennium Development Goals; there is often a lack of institutional support for disability inclusion in development; staff may be resistant on account of lack of knowledge or skills and concerns over added workload and lack of resources; and lack of monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

Austria

46. In Austria, the Federal Development Cooperation Act of 2002 (amended 2003) sets forth development-policy criteria and includes basic principles by which programmes and projects are to be governed, including consideration for the needs of children and persons with disabilities.[37] The central development policy positions and strategic framework of the Austrian Development Cooperation are defined in the Three-Year Programme on Austrian Development Policy for the period 2008-2010.[38] The Programme states that the intention of the Austrian Development Cooperation is to account for persons with disabilities in its programmes and projects and pay due attention to inclusive development.

47. Austrian Development Cooperation programming includes both disability-specific projects and the inclusion of disability within mainstream programmes. In 2005, the Austrian Development Cooperation released a focus paper on disability

[32] The 1997 Policy Paper states that: "While the ADA applies to U.S. citizens (including USAID employees) overseas, it does not apply to non-U.S. citizens, who are the primary beneficiaries of USAID programs. The USAID disability policy is thus in part an effort to extend the spirit of the ADA in areas beyond the jurisdiction of U.S. law".

[33] See www.ausaid.gov.au/makediff/default.cfm.

[34] See www.ausaid.gov.au/keyaid/pdf/FINAL%20AusAID_Development%20for%20All.pdf.

[35] Kristen Pratt, "Inclusive Development: A New Era in Consultation", *AusAID Special Issue No. 73*, p. 23. April 2009.

[36] See www.ausaid.gov.au/hottopics/topic.cfm?ID=5848_9505_6245_8952_1116.

[37] Others include the right of partner countries to choose their own way of development, respect for cultural diversity, and gender equality.

[38] See www.entwicklung.at/uploads/media/ThreeYearProgramme08-1001.pdf.

within the context of development cooperation.[39] The paper identifies seven guiding principles to support the integration and equality of persons with disabilities.

Canada

48. The Canadian International Development Agency has a long-established record of supporting capacity-building for disabled peoples organizations, the most prominent being Disabled Peoples International, a global, grass-roots, cross-disability membership organization active in more than 130 countries. Others include project support for the Canadian Association for Community Living, designed to raise awareness and engage with Canadians and Canadian-based development NGOs on the need to combat global poverty and exclusion of people with intellectual disabilities.[40]

European Union

49. The European Commission addresses disability and development based upon its 2004 *Guidance Note on Disability and Development*.[41] The document provides advice to the European Union on how to address disability within the context of development cooperation and explicitly recognizes that poverty reduction goals "cannot be met without considering the needs of disabled people" and that "disabled people are still not sufficiently included in international development work funded by the EU".

50. The Guidance Note articulates four core principles intended to serve as a guide: understand the scale and impact of disability in the country setting and recognize the diversity of the population of persons with disabilities; advocate and support the human rights model of disability as opposed to the charity/medical approach; pursue a "twin-track approach", defined as the need to "mainstream disability issues across all relevant programmes and projects and to have specific projects for disabled people"; and assess, as part of the mid-term review, the extent to which country programmes are inclusive of persons with disabilities.

51. The European Parliament has also endorsed action on inclusive development, adopting a resolution on disability and development that, among other things, calls on the Commission to develop a detailed, technical implementation action plan to implement its Guidance Note and further calls on the Commission to ensure that there are appropriate resources allocated for disability-specific actions.[42]

Finland

52. The Finnish Development Policy Programme has made the promotion of the rights and opportunities of persons with disabilities a cross-cutting objective of all

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[39] See ADC, Focus: Persons with Disabilities within ADC (2005) (www.entwicklung.at/uploads/media/Focus_Persons_with_disabilities_01.PDF).

[40] See www.cacl.ca/English/projects/CIDA.asp.

[41] See *Guidance Note on Disability and Development*, European Commission (July 2004) (http://ec.europa.eu/development/body/publications/docs/Disability_en.pdf).

[42] European parliament resolution on disability and development (2006) (www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=TA&reference=P6-TA-2006-0033&language=EN&ring=B6-2006-0035).

Finnish development cooperation projects.[43] The 2007 development policy states that disability is a cross-cutting theme supported throughout all Finnish development policy. In particular, the policy supports the "promotion of the rights of groups that are easily excluded, particularly children, persons with disabilities, indigenous people and ethnic minorities, and the promotion of equal opportunities for participation".

Germany

53. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)[44] makes reference to disability issues within the framework of its Development Policy Action Plan on Human Rights of 2004-2007 and 2008-2010 and, in that context, focuses on supporting social groups most affected by discrimination, with persons with disabilities identified as among the most highly disadvantaged social groups. The 2008-2010 Action Plan commits to strengthening human rights in partner countries and to implementing international conventions and agreements, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.[45] At the implementation level, both disability-specific and integration/mainstreaming initiatives are part of Germany's development cooperation.

54. In 2006, GTZ, one of the implementing agencies of development cooperation, released a discussion paper in 2006 commissioned by BMZ entitled "Disability and Development: A contribution to promoting the interests of persons with disabilities in German Development Cooperation".[46] The paper recognizes the link between disability and poverty and specifically highlights the importance of disability inclusion in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The paper further emphasizes the need to strengthen the rights of people with disabilities and fosters their participation in all aspects of society.

Ireland

55. The Irish AID Programme prioritizes the reduction of poverty, inequality and exclusion in developing countries and is characterized as part of the global effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.[47] Irish AID states that "traditionally disability has received limited attention from aid agencies and donors" and that "if the Millennium Development Goals are to be achieved, the needs of disabled people must be considered alongside other development challenges by national governments, donors, international organizations and NGOs". The Irish AID "White Paper on Irish Aid" addresses disability within a disability-specific framework, undertaking to "examine the possibilities for increased activity in the area of

[43] Development Policy Programme 2007: Towards a Sustainable and Just World Community, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 2007 (http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=107497).

[44] See www.bmz.de/en.

[45] "Development Policy Action Plan on Human Rights 2008-2010", Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ), Strategies No. 6 (www.bmz.de/en/service/infothek/fach/konzepte/konzept167.pdf).

[46] See www.disabilityworld.org/01_07/gdcpolicypaper.shtml.

[47] See www.irishaid.gov.ie/about.asp.

disability and development, such as support for specific programmes to address the needs of disabled people".[48]

Italy

56. The thrust of disability initiatives under the Italian disability policy for development cooperation[49] is to take specific action to confront social exclusion and economic marginalization. The work is focused to ensure participation of organizations of persons with disabilities and their members, adopting a multi-disciplinary approach, and supporting processes for inclusion.

57. The policy specifically references support for initiatives that enable inclusive education, employment training and creation, awareness of rehabilitation and prevention in a way that produces multiplying effects such as working in partnership with local organizations of persons with disabilities, highlighting capacity-building initiatives and funding pilot projects. The policy also recognizes the "multiple discrimination" experienced by persons with disabilities and commits to addressing the rights of women and minors in particular. Priorities include both disability-specific needs and the mainstreaming and integration of persons with disabilities within development sectors.

Japan

58. The cooperation of the Japan International Cooperation Agency in the field of persons with disabilities started in the early 1980s, particularly in training on rehabilitation and of leaders of organizations of persons with disabilities. Throughout the past two decades, the Agency has strengthened the disability dimension in development cooperation in the Asia Pacific region as well as interregionally.[50]

59. The Japan International Cooperation Agency issued the JICA Thematic Guidelines on Disability in 2003, which require, in order to contribute to the full participation and equality of persons with disabilities, that its projects show that they understand the situation of persons with disabilities in the country concerned. The project must also estimate its potential impact not only on the beneficiaries, but also on the persons who may be affected indirectly, including any effects on persons with disabilities, and also evaluate if persons with disabilities are inappropriately excluded as beneficiaries.

60. One of the flagship disability programmes supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency is the Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability Project. The Project aims to encourage persons with disabilities to empower themselves through networking that involves Governments and NGOs in the region.[51] The Center also carries out cooperation programmes with countries in the region. In February 2009, it hosted the first Asia-Pacific Conference on the theme "Community-

[48] See www.irishaid.gov.ie/whitepaper/assets/White%20Paper%20English.pdf.

[49] See "Italian Cooperation Guidelines Concerning the Disabled", General Directorate for Development Cooperation (2009) (www.make-development-inclusive.org/docsen/lineeguidainglese.pdf).

[50] See www.jica.go.jp/english.

[51] See *Analysis from a Capacity Development Perspective Asia-Pacific Development Center on Disability Project*, Japan International Cooperation Agency, Institute for International Cooperation (March 2008) (www.jica.go.jp/english/publications/reports/study/topical/disability/pdf/00.pdf).

based Inclusive Development: Persons with disabilities and their families" in collaboration with the World Health Organization, ESCAP, and several NGOs.

New Zealand

61. Several core documents inform New Zealand's International Aid and Development Agency's approach to disability inclusion in its development programming.[52] The Agency has funded a number of individual in-country projects throughout the Pacific region, many of which include capacity-building support for disabled peoples' organizations. In addition, the New Zealand Disability Strategy[53] provides for a long-term process of ensuring that New Zealand is an inclusive society for all people with disabilities. As a cross-government strategy, it informs the wide variety of domestic and international policies and sets forth 15 objectives, each of which is underpinned by detailed actions.

Norway

62. The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation adopted a plan of action entitled, "The inclusion of disability in Norwegian development cooperation", published in 2002. The plan covers Norwegian policy concerning persons with disabilities, relevant international agreements and conventions, including discussion on challenges linked to development and disability issues, and sets forth practical guidelines for how the work can be implemented.

Sweden

63. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's poverty policy underlines the importance of carrying out poverty analyses that include the situation of persons with disabilities and facilitate their participation in social development. The Agency adopted a disability position paper in 2005, entitled "Children and adults with disabilities", which emphasizes that the "situation of persons with disabilities shall therefore generally be taken into consideration in SIDA's overall development analysis and in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation activities".[54]

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

64. The United Kingdom's Department for International Development recently released a practice paper entitled, "How To Note: Working on Disability in Country Programmes".[55] The document, building on several previous studies, sets forth the

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[52] See "New Zealand's aid programme — an overview", NZAID (www.nzaid.govt.nz/library/docs/factsheet-nzaid-overview.pdf); see also "Towards A Safe and Just World Free of Poverty: NZAID Policy Statement", NZAID (2002) (www.nzaid.govt.nz/library/docs/nzaid-policy-statement.pdf).

[53] See "New Zealand Disability Strategy: Making a World of Difference Whakanui Oranga", New Zealand Ministry of Health, Minister for Disability Issues (2001) (www.odi.govt.nz/nzds). For a copy of progress reports on the Strategy, see "Progress in Implementing the New Zealand Disability Strategy: 2003-2004", New Zealand Minister for Disability Issues, Office of Disability Issues, Ministry for Social Development (2004) (www.odi.govt.nz/nzds).

[54] "Children and adults with disabilities", Swedish International Development Agency, Department of Democracy and Development (2005) (www.make-development-inclusive.org/docsen/SWChildrenandadultswithdisabilities.pdf).

[55] "How To Note: Working on Disability in Country Programmes", United Kingdom Department for International Development (2007) (www.make-development-inclusive.org/docsen/howtonotedfid.pdf).

rationale for prioritizing disability inclusion in development, underscoring the link between poverty and disability and the impossibility of achieving the Millennium Development Goals absent disability inclusion. Disability programming supported by the Department for International Development includes both disability-specific initiatives as well as disability components within the framework of a mainstream programme.

65. The Department for International Development began its approach to mainstreaming through the launching of an issues paper entitled "Disability, Poverty and Development".[56] The paper and the approach it articulates were directly inspired by the pursuit of greater equality for women — a "twin-track" approach "combining attempts to take account of women's needs and rights in the mainstream of development cooperation work, as well as supporting specific initiatives aimed at women's empowerment". As defined by the Department, the approach both encourages specific projects to address the needs of persons with disabilities, as well as wider efforts to mainstream disability equality into wider poverty reduction strategies.

United States

66. USAID made its 1997 disability guidelines officially part of USAID policy in 2004, thereby requiring that a disability component be integrated throughout all USAID-funded programmes.[57] These programmes include ensuring that USAID staff is sensitized on inclusive development and that USAID is implementing disability-inclusive programming. In September 2009, the United States National Council on Disability commissioned a study that will examine in detail the extent to which foreign assistance programming is inclusive of persons with disabilities. The study will also include an analysis of the implementation of the USAID Disability Policy.

VI. Conclusion and recommendations

67. **The present report has shown that while disability-specific development cooperation has been established for several decades, mainstreaming disability in overall development cooperation is relatively new and ongoing, with many agencies starting such work only after the year 2000.**

68. **Despite the time, energy and resources that many development agencies have invested to develop policies and guidance notes, there is still limited information on, and experience in, the implementation of disability mainstreaming. The achievement of mainstreaming at all levels remains a major challenge. Further efforts are therefore required in order to give meaning to the concept of mainstreaming and its realization in practice. In particular, article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which addresses international cooperation, provides a comprehensive normative framework, as well as specific guidance, for mainstreaming disability. The General Assembly may wish to consider the following recommendations for**

[56] See www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/publications/disabilitypovertydevelopment.pdf.

[57] See USAID "USAID Disability Policy Paper" (Washington, D.C., 1997) (www.usaid.gov/about/disability/DISABPOL.FIN.html).

mainstreaming disability in the international development agenda specifically in the area of international development cooperation, in order to close the gap between policy and practice, and to improve implementation:

(a) Disability-inclusive policies should be adopted at all levels of development cooperation in line with the international normative and operational frameworks for development cooperation, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (with a focus on article 32) and other relevant international instruments on disability and development;

(b) Member States and development agencies should be encouraged to continue efforts to mainstream disability in overall development agendas, to further policy development for disability-inclusive development and to operationalize disability mainstreaming in development programming;

Member States and development agencies should also be encouraged to conduct periodic reviews and assessments, analysing the extent to which disability is effectively mainstreamed in development activities, with a view to identifying best practices and eliminating gaps between stated policy goals and the results of implementation efforts;

(d) Member States and development agencies should be urged to recognize the importance of accessibility to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in development activities, and to take action to make the physical environment accessible to persons with disabilities of any kind and to provide accessible information and communication;

(e) Member States and development agencies should also be urged to recognize the importance of participation and ensure the consultation, inclusion and integration of persons with disabilities and their organizations in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of development cooperation strategies and activities;

(f) Member States and development agencies should be encouraged to conduct disability awareness-raising, education and training activities for their employees and to consider actively recruiting persons with disabilities at all levels and functions, including field positions;

(g) Member States and development agencies should also be encouraged to link the mainstreaming of disability in development to other inclusive and mainstreaming processes, such as gender mainstreaming, in order to consolidate mainstreaming in a socially-inclusive process to promote development.